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Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family

Letter dated 4 October 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

As you know, my country, Senegal, hosted the fourth session of the World Youth Forum of the United Nations System from 6 to 10 August 2001. Hundreds of young people from all over the world, representing all cultures, all religions and all shades of political opinion, took part in the work of the Forum (see annexes).*

The document adopted at the conclusion of this important gathering of world youth, entitled the "Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy", sets out priority areas of action and interest identified by young people themselves.

On instructions from my Government, I should like to request that the text of the "Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy" be issued as a document of the fifty-sixth session of the General Assembly, under agenda item 108 entitled "Social development, including questions relating to the world social situation and to youth, ageing, disabled persons and the family".

(*Signed*) Papa Louis **Fall**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations

* Annexes are being circulated in the language of submission.

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Annex I to the letter dated 4 October 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy

1 We, the young people participating in the fourth session of the World Youth Forum of the United Nations System, hosted by the Government of Senegal in cooperation with the United Nations, gathered in Dakar from 6 to 10 August 2001;

2 We emphasize that this document is designed to strengthen, not replace, the Braga Youth Action Plan developed at the third session of the World Youth Forum of the United Nations System, held in Braga, Portugal, 1998. As such, we resubmit the Braga Youth Action plan to the nation states of the United Nations, and demand it is adopted together with the Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy at the General Assembly;

3 We recognize the efforts made by Governments and the United Nations in adopting and effectively implementing the provisions of the World Programme of Action for Youth to the Year 2000 and Beyond, adopted by the General Assembly in 1996, and the Lisbon Declaration on Youth Policies and Programmes, adopted at the World Conference of Ministers Responsible for Youth, held at Lisbon from 8 to 12 August 1998;

4 We welcome the opportunity given to young people to be given a voice in the upcoming United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children, and we also call for the General Assembly bi-annual session on Youth to endorse the recommendations herein contained in this Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy;

5 We are highly concerned about the continued deterioration of the status of youth worldwide, who face growing levels of unemployment, poverty, armed conflict, epidemic diseases, functional illiteracy and substance abuse - among other social and economic challenges -despite global advances made in technologies, entrepreneurship development, medical research, leisure and recreation facilities;

6 We realize that over one billion of the world population lives in poverty, facing daily the unacceptable conditions of hunger and malnutrition, disease, homelessness, unsafe environments and social exclusion, and that the majority of this population consists of young people, three quarters of them living in rural areas. We feel that the cycle of indebtedness of developing countries is a major contributor to hunger and poverty, and note with sorrow that debt forgiveness is not being implemented in accordance with the expediency and urgency of the need;

7 We recognize that in spite of progress made in basic education, inequity based on economic and social conditions, sex and disabilities continues to persist, leaving millions of children and young people out of school. We recognize that the quality of basic education needs substantial improvement, and should include life skills and new information technologies.

8 We acknowledge that the youth continue to face serious health issues, in particular the HIV/ AIDS pandemic, which is the biggest challenge facing our generation. We call upon governments to implement the United Nations General Assembly Special Session Declaration on AIDS, and encourage all stakeholders to carry out the responsibilities articulated in the HIV/ AIDS annex to the Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy. Additionally, we acknowledge that youth continue to loose lives to acute respiratory infections, vaccination-preventable dieseases and malnutrition. These risks continue to result in the loss of lives to a very large scale. Violence and suicide are also growing factors of youth mortality. We also recognize that the access to quality child and youth-friendly health services as well as health education are still issues that need to be seriously addressed.

9 We are aware of the need for action now to promote sustainable development and conservation and protection of the environment for the benefit of future generations, backed by responsible and sustainable consumption of world resources by nations, communities and individuals. We call for renewed action to implement the provisions of Agenda 21 and the Habitat Agenda;

10 We note that women, particularly young women and girls, are the most vulnerable and most affected by social and economic problems and in times of armed conflict, and that their status as equal partners in youth development and empowerment is essential in overcoming the societal imbalances that continue to prevail;

11 We are highly concerned about the prevalence of human rights violations with regard to young people, such as child labour, trafficking and sexual exploitation, children and youth in armed conflict and living in countries under occupation, and the exclusion of children and youth infected and affected by AIDS, including those orphaned by it.

12 We are very concerned that sixty-six million young people are reported to be unemployed throughout the world, representing more than 40 percent of global unemployment, and that hundreds of millions more work fewer hours than they wish, and still others, work long hours with little gain and no social protection in the informal economy.

13 We are convinced of the importance of providing young people with the resources and enabling environment to tackle the personal and societal challenges that beset them;

14. We note that much remains to be done in fostering social integration, and call upon governments to implement resolutions adopted during the Copenhagen Social Summit, as well as the Copenhagen + 5 Summit. Youth at risk of marginalization include among others: young women and men with disabilities, indigenous youth, ethnic and cultural minority youth, youth affected by violence including gender-based violence and by drug and substance abuse, child soldiers, refugees and migrants and young offenders.

15. We call on future World Youth Forum to lead by example and remove the causes of marginalization and provide access to services for youth with disabilities.

16. We choose to dedicate this session of the World Youth Forum to identifying and advocating for initiatives that empower young people to have greater control over their individual and collective destinies, and their ability to effectively contribute to the advancement of the global community;

17. We ultimately call upon Governments, the United Nations System and civil society organizations to support young people in their endeavors to obtain the resources for extensive and comprehensive youth empowerment programmes;

IN THIS QUEST, WE HAVE THEREFORE IDENTIFIED THE FOLLOWING YOUTH EMPOWERMENT STRATEGIES:

Education and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

18. In order to guarantee universal access to primary, secondary and higher education as formulated in the Braga Youth Action Plan and the Dakar Education For All Forum (April 2001), we recommend to the United Nations and intergovernmental bodies involved in youth policies and governments:

(a) An increase in technical, technological, material and financial support through the establishment of an Education and ICT fund, which promotes North – South and South – South cooperation, national, regional and international networking, and government and private partnerships of ICT training centres, and support specific youth voluntary services in the fields of both formal and non formal education and ICT;
(b) the creation of peer education and exchange programmes and policies to encourage and improve the equitable, free and easy use of ICT in underdeveloped rural, urban and remote areas;
(c) the establishment of vocational schools at a community level, the creation of internet cafés, distance learning centres, the training of trainers, and the development of re-training programmes;
(d) the enhancement of existing mass media and interconnected radio, television and internet for improved education processes.

19. In order to mobilize resources and ensure universal and equitable access to education worldwide, youth must engage in advocacy to support policies that:
(a) Improve the quality and access of education and ICT by means of giving a priority to education and ICT and waving of taxes on ICT materials intended for free community use;
(b) Create government and private partnerships, global cooperation and regional strategies to promote ICT in education;
(c) Increase the budget for education and ICT in the respective national budgets, expressed as a percentage of the GDP;
(d) Eliminate school fees, and support children through grants to ensure that they do not leave school in order to work;
(e) Stimulate non governmental and United Nations cooperation;
(f) Implement of bilateral and multilateral debt relief for a better and broader ICT programme implementation;
(g) Reduce the prices of ICT material and training;
(h) Encourage the local production of educational and ICT content and access to content;
(i) Create policies to address the special needs of vulnerable and marginalized groups.

20. In order to empower young people and close the digital divide, it is necessary that youth understand ICT. ICT must be used as media for the dissemination of information about such important issues as HIV/AIDS prevention and de-stigmatisation, personal hygience and maintenance of sanitary conditions, environmental problems and matters of cultural and social nature having a practical impact on the every day life of young people.

Employment

21. Recognizing the urgent need to create decent work for young people, we welcome the draft recommendations of the high-level panel of the Secretary-General's Youth Employment Network, and in particular, the call for national governments to develop within one year's time, national reviews and action plans on youth employment, and to ensure strong involvement of young people in this process. These action plans should take into account the recommendations of the World Youth Forum as well as an analysis of the international dimensions of employment as call for by the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly entitled "World Summit for Social Development and Beyond: Achieving Social Development for All in a Globalizing World."

22. We recognize that there are too many young people lacking the necessary education and training for good productive jobs, too few jobs and too many unproductive jobs with poor remuneration and security. We therefore call for:

1. An increase in investment in relevant skills training, emphasizing training appropriate to the job market and the informal sector by among other things, greater collaboration between employers and training providers;
2. The more effective promotion of entrepreneurship among young women and men by the provision of better information on market opportunities, training in business skills, access to capital (credit and other financial services), mentoring by qualified persons, and other business support services; and
3. The establishment of a social floor for young people by improving their working conditions, promoting their rights at work and recognizing their voice and representation at work, and guarantee a minimum income which covers life costs to protect the working poor, in keeping with the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work (see also recommendation 9 of the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Youth Employment).

23. There is a need to guarantee the freedom of association and the right to strike for young working people. There is also a need for taxes to be imposed on large international financial flows of multinational companies between countries.

24. We are also gravely concerned with the accumulation of international debt, particularly by developing countries, which creates a burden to be borne by young people and future generations. We call for continuing the process of debt cancellation by bilateral and multilateral creditors, and in that context, for ensuring social development, are substantively addressed by Poverty Reduction Strategies developed by Highly Indebted Poor Countries, and also that young women and men are fully consulted in the development of these strategies. Therefore, we call for the allocation of a portion of the corresponding resources from the re-conversion of developing countries' debts to funds to be co-managed by young people, that will be used to better integrate young women and men into labour markets and to programmes to create job opportunities.

25. A fundamental element of youth empowerment is access of young people to policy-making bodies at local, national and international levels. In this framework, the fourth session of the World Youth Forum takes note of work being organized by the International Labour Organization (ILO) to develop a Global Agenda for Employment. We further call for strong participation of youth in the Global Employment Forum being organized by the ILO in Geneva in November 2001 to elaborate this Agenda.

26. Mobility and migration of labour towards areas of high employment can not be denied or stopped. It causes, for instance, xenophobia, exploitation and a de-unionised labour force. A legal framework should be drawn up internationally to contain and manage this notion.

Health and population

27. Recognizing that young people should take an active role in conceptualisation, decision-making, implementation and evaluation of health policies, and organize themselves at various levels to create effective networks and develop skills to mobilize resources in order to implement the following recommendations,

28. Requesting local, national, international government bodies, agencies of the United Nations System, school systems and health service organizations to support youth participation in creating, implementing and evaluating policies and programs pertaining to youth health issues,

29. Taking into consideration that HIV/AIDS is decimating our generation, that lack of education and information, stigmatisation and negative taboos have increased the vulnerability of youth, and that the public and private sector, national governments and the international community, including bodies such as the United Nations and all NGOs must take action in stopping the HIV/AIDS,

Capacity-Building

30. Ask governments and the United Nations system for access to national and international resources in order to establish formal and informal programs of education on HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, sexual and reproductive health and mental health,

31. Improve and recognize the role of peers through reinforcement of capacities of intervention of young people at the same time on a technical, material and financial level,

32. Affirm the important role that families in all forms, peers and communities play in creating an environment conducive to the development of skills leading to healthier lives,

Advocacy

33. Permit young people to participate actively in the conceptualization, decision-making, implementation and evaluation processes to,

- create effective youth-focused networks;
- the creation, development and support of free disease assistance for everybody (including care, treatment and vaccinations);
- prepare and disseminate statistical data which illustrate the health situation of young people to NGOs, local and national governments, international bodies, and youth themselves;
- demonstrate to the system of the United Nations, governments and NGOs the positive impact of youth participation in the promotion of healthier behaviours and practices.

34. Governments to commit themselves to implementing participatory policies that ensure:

- free access for young people to health information, education, health sector [in particular sexual and reproductive health and mental health] services in order to avoid STIs and HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancies, to prevent illegal abortion, substance abuse and mental illness,
- implementation of policies that promote a multi-sectoral approach to health that responds better to the specific needs of young people,
- equal opportunities and rights to all children and youth without distinction as to age, gender, race, religion, ethnicity, and socio-economic status,
- mobilization of resources to implement the recommendations adopted by UNGASS on HIV/AIDS of 2001, especially those recommendations pertaining directly to rights and needs of young people,
- to consider the fight against HIV/AIDS, substance abuse and suicide as a priority in promoting the health of young people,
- to combat female genital mutilation and violence against women;

Awareness Raising

35. NGOs, local and national governments, international bodies, and youth themselves to:

- support and sustain youth-empowering community-based peer-education activities to raise awareness on questions regarding the health of young people [on HIV/AIDS, substance abuse, sexual and reproductive health] in both formal and informal sectors, and this with special attention to taboos and traditional socio-cultural beliefs that have negative effects and to traditional socio-cultural beliefs that have positive effects,
- recognize the fundamental role that young people, families, teachers, and communities play in raising youth awareness on all health, including mental, sexual and reproductive health, issues,
- recall to mind that awareness-raising campaigns should reinforce positive behaviours and seek to transform negative practices in a constructive and positive way in all young people including marginalized and excluded youth.

Hunger, Poverty and Debt

36. In order to empower young people in rural and urban areas to combat hunger and poverty especially of youth they need to be provided with the necessary resources and capacities in order to create employment and raise an income for their own sustainable livelihoods. Priority should be given to rural youth greatly affected by hunger and poverty through specific programmes and funding involving the provision of production resources such as land, water and seeds, of appropriate technologies and the training on sustainable farming, life skills and natural resource management. The United Nations, United Nations bodies and agencies, governments and regional organizations should make decisive efforts to establish a fund for the development of youth, to be managed by youth and geared towards youth.

37. Education, training and capacity building of youth are of paramount importance in the provision of a long term strategy to minimize the effects of hunger and to eradicate poverty. To combat illiteracy free basic education has to go along with the creation of an enabling environment that accommodates the needs of young people. Curricula for both basic education and training should not only cover the intellectual aspect of human development but also practical and social skills. Special programmes should be designed for illiterate out of school youth. Capacities should be built for youth to effectively respond to the challenging global problems like climate change, land degradation, loss of biodiversity, HIV/AIDS, increasing marginaliztion of vulnerable groups, the growing gap between the rich and the poor, the instability of the international financial systems and the predominance of the neo-liberal paradigm. Governments, in collaboration with youth organizations should design, implement and monitor policies to meet the needs of young people in terms of education, training and capacity building. Youth organizations shall be involved in this process at all levels.

38. To fight effectively against hunger and poverty a comprehensive approach needs to involve all parts of civil society, especially youth, in the policy making and implementation areas of hunger, poverty and debt at all levels. The cancellation of external debts is not only a precondition for any effective fight against hunger and poverty; it also frees funding for investment in education, health and youth. The monitoring of the use of this funding and the implementation of poverty eradication strategies shall be monitored by civil society and youth organizations. In the process of globalization, more and more decisions are being taken at the international level (for example by the WTO, IMF and World Bank) having a strong impact on national policies without the installation any system of checks and balances. Governments and the United Nations must ensure full and comprehensive representation of civil society, youth organizations and developing nations in all global and multilateral decision-making forums. For ensuring the minimum standard of life for everyone governments shall install social safety nets and give social assistance for young people in need facing difficulties beyond their control.

Human Settlements and the Environment

39. Recognizing the need for stronger involvement of young people in the United Nations system, there should be more cooperation between UNEP, UNCHS and UNDP to properly address the scope of the issues involved. To start with, UNEP Youth Advisory Council and Youth for Habitat International Network should become more closely integrated. As a result of this cooperation, national action plans and national reports for youth contributions to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and Agenda 21 should be prepared. The development and dissemination of a youth-friendly version of the Habitat Agenda should also be undertaken. Nation states must also fulfill their commitment to Agenda 21 and Habitat Agenda, by including young people in official delegations to Rio+10, the Commission for Human Settlements, follow-up meetings to Habitat II Conference and other important meetings at all levels.

40. We acknowledge the potential role for national and regional youth platforms to monitor the implementation of Agenda 21 and the Habitat Agenda. Sub-committees in national youth platforms and regional bodies should be created to monitor the implementation of global agendas such as Agenda 21 and Habitat Agenda. Communication between these sub-committees and regional bodies should also be encouraged.

41. We recognize the need for youth capacity-building in sustainable development in order to increase participation. There should be a number of training centers for Agenda 21 and Habitat to build capacity in young people. These centers should focus on training tutors to return to their nation states, emphasizing

peer education in issues of sustainable development. These centers should also develop and supply training methods and multimedia materials for young people to bring to their communities. One way to implement these training centers could be to send young people to different nation states for an extended period (e.g. 3 months) to carry out the training. There should be follow up and monitoring of the training sessions, and indigenous and traditional knowledge should also be respected in the training.

42. Recognizing the ecological debt of the North to the South, sustainable development indicators, that adequately measure environmental services, and that take into account the current eco-systems of the countries of the South and the impact of their consumption patterns on the environment, need to be utilized in order to develop, in an integrated manner, policies of equity among the regions of the world. We also call for a halt to the exportation of waste and polluting consumer products.

Social Integration

43. Technical, human and financial support must be focused on assisting marginalized and vulnerable youth to organize themselves in order to address their own needs and interests, and make their particular contribution to social progress. Training in and access to ICT for marginalized and vulnerable youth through means such as programmes of agencies and bodies of the United Nations system can then become, amongst other methods, an integral tool for networking, to develop awareness of programmes and legislation that is of benefit to marginalized youth, to facilitate exchanges, pressure groups and support.

44. Young people and youth NGOs are the best agents for delivering change for other young people, with volunteerism being a key tool that should be promoted among youth organizations in order for them to take the lead in peer-to-peer training to stimulate, support and facilitate the role of marginalized and vulnerable youth in the wider society. The United Nations system becomes a truly partnership organization. Partnerships should develop skills within three spheres: Economical, Technical, and joint decision-making. Exchanges should be used to develop the capacity of young person NGOs by facilitating the interchange of information both between themselves and with the United Nations agencies and programmes. The free flow of people between nations should be facilitated.

45. Advocacy that is significantly beneficial to the participation and integration of marginalized and vulnerable young people must be fulfilled at local, national and international levels: Making connections with authorities at local level increases the ability of activities to have an effect on the lives of young people. This must be sensitive to the opportunities and strategies at the local level. At the regional and international level, to promote and ensure the interests of marginalized and vulnerable youth in the regional youth platforms and by youth representatives to decision-making bodies such as the general assembly. National and Regional bodies should be promoted to act for and represent the needs of young people within a setting that has common values, history and methods. Advocacy should also promote equal opportunities for marginalized and vulnerable youth through such means as education – formal, non-formal and informal – and employment (including training) in order for them to participate in all levels and aspects of society. The International level should be used as an opportunity for methods and skills to be shared within a setting that has no prejudice and is diverse enough to give value.

46. Share among the organizations of marginalized and vulnerable youth the various ways in which they can collaborate within the United Nations system. This should include opportunities to work with field offices and to learn about the processes and criteria required to obtain consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council and the specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system. Youth organizations should organize themselves to ensure that governments are effectively adopting and implementing resolutions adopted during the Copenhagen social summit and its + 5, and hence strengthen their social integration policies and programmes, including rehabilitation, health, education, entertainment and vocational training programmes. Youth organizations should mobilize the channels of social integration family, media schools, youth NGOS, religious groups to promote awareness about the causes and cost of social exclusion and to promote programmes that foster social integration

Culture of Peace

47. Peace is not just an absence of war, but also a state of mind, individual or collective, a social cultural, political and economic harmony. Peace is also a way of being, a way of living. Hence, to build a true culture of peace we need to develop justice, respect of human rights, to fight against poverty. We need to favour intercultural dialogue, which should be among civilastions, and to empower minorities and fight marginalization and exclusion. As youth, and bearing in mind the above, it is our challenge to be determined to increase our influence and our out spoken conclusion to our governments concerning the dialogue to build a culture of peace. Therefore we support the following concrete proposals to support youth against oppression: We have to recognise the number of existing obstacles for the realisation of a true culture of peace. We wish to underline the following elements:

- armed conflict and trafficking and circulation of weapons;
- the interference of outside economic and financial interests in developing countries as causes of conflict and exploitation;
- intolerance, illiteracy and discrimination in all areas.

48. We call upon a network of young people that are involved with United Nations agencies to begin conflict resolution on all levels in a bilateral way. The three recommendations we propose to achieve this is by:

- To form a youth network which could generate mechanisms to ensure the participation of young representatives in reconciliation process, negotiation and peace building;
- To demand compensation and justice for slavery, colonization and marginalization as crimes against humanity;
- To develop and support the education of a culture of peace in programmes of schools in all levels.

49. We call upon the United Nations and governments globally to put in place mechanisms to hinder acts of, and intentions to commit genocide and to severely punish perpetrators of genocide.

50. We call for the protection of the material and non-material heritage of countries and restitution of spoliated cultural goods.

51. We call on global powers to invest in development projects instead of in the financing of conflicts.

Youth Policy, Participation and Rights

52. The United Nations system should improve its way of communicating with youth organizations, guaranteeing that any meeting or consultation fulfils the criteria of being affordable, respecting the existing democratic and legitimate channels of youth, and should grantee implementation and evaluation. We reiterate the call for national governments to include youth representatives, selected by youth in an open and democratic manner, in their delegations to the United Nations General Assembly and all other intergovernmental meetings. The United Nations Youth Unit, with the assistance of youth organizations experienced in this area, should serve as a clearing-house for information for youth organizations to lobby their governments for these youth representative positions. There should be increased representation of youth within the Youth Unit itself through a system of placements of members of youth organizations, as well as increased status for the Youth Unit within the United Nations system to coordinate all youth participation in the United Nations system.

53. National governments should implement legislation to protect human rights, as they relate to youth, including protecting rights to participation in decision-making, access to quality education fostering responsible citizenship, and access to human rights education. We ask for the rights of the youth living in countries under occupation, embargoes and wars to be given international protection. We also call for national governments and the United Nations to promote and disseminate the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and demand that all governments show their commitment to the Convention through its full implementation.

54. Financial support, training and facilities need to be provided at a local, national and international level in order to ensure young peoples active participation in decision-making, and development activities and programmes. We further recommend that governments design and implement programs that can build the institutional capacity of youth organizations. We support the creation of independent and democratic local and national youth councils, as well as regional platforms where they do not exist. We call for existing youth councils and platforms to adhere to these aforementioned principles. In order to meet the challenges of young people specifically in developing countries, the United Nations should reconsider the United Nations definition of youth and raise the upper limit to 30.

Young Women and Girls

55. We encourage all stakeholders to invest in compulsory and free education at all levels for girls, adolescents and young female, both in formal and non-formal environments. There is a need to involve girls and young women in the design, implementation and evaluation of policies and programmes that target youth. We demand cost reduction for contraceptives and AIDS treatment, and prevention/treatment for STDs. We call for the improvement of knowledge, research and data, qualitative and quantitative, on the needs of adolescent's girls and young women.

56. We call for an increase in information and media coverage of issues related to girls and young women at local and international levels, using traditional and modern media. It is necessary to introduce skills and content related to sex education, family life education and human rights at all levels. Violence should be combated, and we call for the creation of youth and female friendly activities and services for young women and girls, offering life skills counseling, shelters for at risk young women. We call for an increase in training for peer counseling, respecting and focusing on gender balance. There is also a great need to ensure access to livelihood activities, such as income generating activities micro-project management training et cetera.

57. It is crucial to break stereotypes in education by raising awareness the role and contribution of girls and young women in society. Youth organizations should mobilize governments to offer economic incentives or policies to increase girls' education. Young women's positive image should be enhanced by encouraging young women who have education in science and math to be used as role models and mentors

Youth, Sports and Leisure Time Activities

58. Sports, leisure activities, such as leisure sports, cultural leisure activities and traditional forms of leisure, socio-educational leisure activities, and even paid entertainment allow individuals to manage their free time without constraints. Even in difficult situations, these activities give young people the opportunity to entertain themselves, to relax, to play, and to find cultural enrichment. Furthermore, sports and leisure activities give young people the possibility of self-expression, personal fulfillment, and personal development as an individual and as a member of a group. In addition, sports and leisure activities can raise awareness in young people that can inspire them to contribute to the improvement of their living conditions through volunteerism. These activities should be available to all young people without exclusion based on gender, religion or social condition. It favours social inclusion, including for young people with special needs.

60. Youth structures and associations should be granted by the United Nations organizations and others with human, material and economic assistance, necessary for the realization of different activities especially those related to the development of sports, leisure time activities, and socio-educative activities.

61. The United Nations should encourage international organizations and NGOs to work directly on grassroot levels through youth associations for the development of sports; culture, traditional activities and socio-cultural activities.

62. The United Nations system should encourage promote, and find ways to recognise the participation of young voluntary workers in different organizations, NGOs and youth associations

Moreover, the United Nations should take care of the security of young volunteers and promote all training facilities and technical assistance for their work.

63. We encourage sport programs that are specially for disabled people and encourage the participation of disabled people in the regular sports activities at all levels.

Implementation and Monitoring

64. Mechanisms for monitoring and implementation of the Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy and the Braga Youth Action Plan must be established including: (a) national reports from youth organizations, (b) national reports from governments, (c) a global report on youth, based on the national reports, published by the United Nations Secretariat.

65. Nations states must fulfill their commitment to Agenda 21 (Chapter 25.9h) by including young people in official delegations to the United Nations General Assembly and other important meetings at all levels.

66. All agencies in the United Nations must strengthen and coordinate their youth programs, and develop strategies for enhancing participation of young people.

67. Nation states must give real and sufficient funding to youth activities by contributing significant amounts to the United Nations Youth Fund, which must become more transparent and accountable to target beneficiaries.

68. The United Nations Secretariat must be given the resources and mandate to monitor the implementation of the Braga and Dakar strategies, based on annual reports from governments.

69. The United Nations system must provide sufficient political, financial and technical support for further world youth forums, based on a broad, representative and democratic process in which criteria are identified.

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Adopted at Dakar, Senegal
10 August 2001

Annex II to the letter dated 4 October 2001 from the Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement on HIV/AIDS

Preamble

1. Because HIV/AIDS represents the greatest threat to the health and security of our generation;
2. And because more than half of all new HIV/AIDS deaths occur in young people under the age of 24.
3. And because HIV/AIDS has been recognized as a critical issue in documents, including the 2000 Africa Development Forum, the 2001 United Nations General Assembly on AIDS Youth Caucus Position Paper, the 2001 Asia-Pacific Youth Declaration, and others;
4. And because HIV/AIDS is set to destroy much of our generation in Africa and is an increasingly deadly force in Asia and the Pacific, the Caribbean, South America, and in communities in North America and Europe;
5. We , the youth of the world, annex this document to the Dakar Youth Empowerment Strategy in recognition of the crucial relevance of the HIV/AIDS crisis to all issues facing youth in the 21st century.

The Responsibilities of Youth

6. We take it upon ourselves to lead the fight against HIV/AIDS in our own communities and worldwide;
7. We resolve to practice and promote sexual responsibility, including through the right to choose not to have sex, and if we choose to have sex, the use of condoms;
8. We resolve to create and support programmes and projects to prevent the spread of HIV/AIDS, reduce stigma and discrimination related to HIV/AIDS, and support treatment, care and support of people living with HIV/AIDS;
9. We resolve to organize and support North-South and South-South collaboration to share best practices and resources among youth organizations fighting HIV/AIDS;
10. We resolve to encourage our governments and international institutions to mobilize sufficient resources, political will and appropriate policies to effectively combat HIV/AIDS, with participation of youth;
11. We resolve to pressure our governments and global institutions to fulfill their commitments as outlined in the 2001 UNGASS Declaration on AIDS;

Responsibilities of Government and Civil Society

12. We call upon governments, international institutions, and civil society to respect the human rights of youth and especially of young people living with and affected by HIV/AIDS;
13. We call upon governments, international institutions, and civil society to remove barriers to effective prevention, care and treatment – including laws that reduce access to essential medicines, laws that discriminate against people living with HIV/AIDS, laws that prevent the social marketing and free and low-cost distribution of condoms and other prevention materials, and laws that restrict the flow of comprehensive sexuality education to youth;
14. We call upon governments and civil society to finance and support the creation and distribution of new technologies to fight HIV/AIDS, including new medications, female-controlled methods of contraception including female condoms and microbicides, and culturally appropriate ways to spread information about HIV/AIDS prevention;
15. We call upon governments and multilateral institutions to forgive bilateral and multilateral debt to LDC's in order that more funding can be used to address HIV/AIDS and other health and education issues;
16. And we call upon developing countries to the scope of the crisis, and to raise contributions to the Global Fund for AIDS and Health up to or above the level called for by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.